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Attorney General

Firearms Dealers

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Frequently Asked Questions

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1. What are California's licensing requirements for firearms dealers?

California firearms dealers must obtain and maintain the following:

- a. A valid FFL,
- b. A valid Seller's Permit issued by the State Board of Equalization,
- c. A valid COE issued by the DOJ,
- d. Any regulatory business license, or licenses, required by local government,
- e. A local license granted by the duly constituted licensing authority, valid for one year from the date of issuance, and in one of the following forms:
 1. In the form prescribed by the Attorney General;
 2. A regulatory or business license that states on its face, "Valid for Retail Sales of Firearms" and endorsed by the signature of the issuing authority; or
 3. A letter from the licensing authority stating that the jurisdiction does not require any form of regulatory or business license or does not otherwise restrict or regulate the sale of firearms. After obtaining the above licenses, an Application for Centralized List and appropriate fees are submitted to the DOJ. Upon approval of the application, the dealer will be given a CFD number and placed on the Centralized List of firearms dealers.
- f. A listing on the DOJ Centralized List of Firearms Dealers.
For more information on dealer licensing or to obtain an Application for Centralized List of Firearms Dealers, contact the Firearms Licensing and Permits Unit at (916) 227-3694.

(PC section 12071(a))

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2. How does a firearms dealer obtain a Large Capacity Magazine Permit?

A DOJ-issued permit is required to import or export ammunition feeding devices that have the capacity to accept more than 10 rounds. Permits are issued, upon request, to licensed firearms dealers whose businesses have a bona fide marketplace for the sale, import, or export of large capacity ammunition feeding devices. To obtain an Application for Large Capacity Magazine Permit (Form FD 050), call the Firearms Licensing and Permits Unit at **(916) 227-3694**.

(PC section 12079)

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3. How much is the annual Centralized List fee and when must it be paid?

The Centralized List annual renewal application and fee must be submitted to the DOJ by January 31st of each year regardless of the date of initial placement on the Centralized List. The Centralized List portion of the annual fee is \$20.00 per licensee at each dealership. There is also an annual inspection fee of \$95.00 per dealership location. Dealerships located in jurisdictions that have a local firearms dealer inspection program are exempt from the \$95.00 inspection fee. Upon request, a list of such jurisdictions is available from the DOJ.

(PC section 12071(f))

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4. What is a CFD number?

The CFD number is a unique number assigned by the DOJ to each firearms dealer location in California that the DOJ recognizes as fully licensed pursuant to PC Section 12071. The CFD number serves as the dealer's identifier for submitting DROS information and for other business dealings with the DOJ.

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5. Does my CFD number make my COE obsolete?

No. Your CFD number is assigned to your dealership location when you are recorded on the Centralized List. The COE is your eligibility clearance for firearms possession. You must have both as part your firearms dealer licensing.

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6. Do copies of a dealer's FFLs and local firearms license(s) need to be sent to the DOJ?

Yes. It is the dealer's ongoing responsibility to provide the DOJ with current copies of all required licenses and to provide copies of renewals within thirty days of a license's expiration date. A dealer who fails to provide copies of renewals will be subject to removal from the Centralized List and a \$20.00 reinstatement fee.

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7. How is DROS information submitted?

The dealer collects the DROS information and documentation from the purchaser and submits it to the DOJ through MCI utilizing a Point of Sale Device (PSD). When the DROS is accepted, a unique DROS number is assigned to the transaction and the required 10-day waiting period begins.

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8. Can I use the personal computer in my store to submit DROS information?

Firearms dealers may use their own computers to submit DROS information if their computer meets the minimum configuration requirements and they have a magnetic card swipe reader. The DROS information is sent via a secure dial-in connection directly to the current DROS contractor, MCI. To determine the minimum PC configuration requirements to submit DROS information, contact the MCI DROS Service Center at **1-800-974-DROS** (3767). Please note, however, that Macintosh computers cannot be used. To obtain a magnetic card swipe reader, contact the manufacturer, NewBold, at **1-888-855-7978** and ask for John Miller. You must inform the manufacturer that you intend to use the device with the California DOJ DROS Entry System. The cost for the device is \$95.00 plus tax, shipping, and handling.

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9. May I opt to report DROS transactions via telephone reporting?

No. However if your DOJ/MCI-issued computer malfunctions, immediately contact the MCI Service Center at

1-800-974-3767 to report the problem. You may then use the operator-assisted telephone system temporarily until your computer is repaired.

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10. How do I get copies of the blank DROS worksheet?

DROS forms are generated by the computer/printer used to submit firearm transaction information to the DOJ. Blank copies of the DROS worksheet may be useful in limited circumstances, such as a computer malfunction. Copies of the most current DROS worksheet may be downloaded and printed from this website's [Dealer Notices, Forms, and Information page](#)

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11. What records of purchases must firearms dealers maintain and how long must they be retained?

A computer-generated hardcopy of the DROS information must be printed out when the DROS information is transmitted and signed by the purchaser and dealer. Signed DROS worksheets or computer printouts must be retained by the dealer in consecutive order for three years.

(PC section 12076(c))

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12. Is a dealer required to give a copy of the DROS information to the purchaser?

Upon request, the dealer must give the purchaser a copy of the signed DROS record. In private party transactions, the seller is also entitled to a copy of the DROS record upon request.

(PC section 12076(c))

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13. What are the signature requirements for the DROS worksheets / computer printouts?

The purchaser must sign the DROS printout. For private party transactions, the seller must also sign the printout. The salesperson is required to sign as a witness to the purchaser's signature and identification.

(PC section 12071(c)(1))

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14. What identification is required for a person to purchase a firearm?

Clear evidence of identity and age is defined as a valid California driver's license or a valid California Identification Card issued by the DMV. Military identification is also acceptable if accompanied by permanent duty station orders indicating a posting in California, but the dealer must retain copies of both documents.

Temporary driver licenses and temporary identification cards (issued without photo) are not accepted forms of proof of identity and age.

(PC section 12071(c)(1))

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15. What happens if there is a problem with the purchaser's driver's license?

If DROS information conflicts with the DMV driver license files or if the license is suspended or invalid, the DOJ will cancel the transaction and notify the firearms dealer. The purchaser should contact DMV to correct or update information in DMV's files. Once the DMV problem has been cleared, a new DROS may be initiated.

(PC section 12071(b)(3)(B))

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16. Is there a maximum number of handguns that a person may purchase?

While no limitation exist for the number of handguns that a person may own, a person is generally limited to making no more than one application to purchase a handgun within any 30 day period. Handgun transactions related to law enforcement, private party transfers, returns to owners, and other specified circumstances are

exempt from the one-handgun-per-30-day restriction.

(PC section 12072(a)(9))

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17. What fees can I charge in addition to the DROS?

In addition to the State's \$19.00 DROS fee, you must also charge a \$1.00 Firearms Safety Testing fee and a \$5.00 Safety and Enforcement fee. If the transaction being processed is a dealer sale, consignment return, or return from pawn, you may impose other charges as long as this amount is clearly shown as a "dealer fee" and not misrepresented as a State fee.

(PC sections 12071(b)(11), (12))

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18. What fees can I charge for handling a Private Party Transfer (PPT)?

If the transaction is a PPT, you are restricted to charging no more than \$25.00 in State fees described and \$10.00 per firearm for conducting the PPT. For example:

- a. For a PPT involving one or more handguns, the total allowable fees are \$35.00 for the first handgun, and \$31.00 for each subsequent handgun.
- b. For PPTs involving one or more long guns, the State fees are limited to \$25.00 for the whole transaction plus \$10.00 dealer fee per firearm transferred.

(PC section 12082)

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19. What are the HSC requirements?

Prior to the submission of DROS information for a handgun purchase, each person purchasing a handgun must present an HSC or [show proof of exemption](#). The dealer must retain a copy of the HSC exemption document attached to the DROS record.

(PC sections 12071, 12081)

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20. What is the waiting period for firearms purchasers?

The waiting period for the purchase or transfer of handguns and long guns is ten (10) 24-hour periods from the date and time of the acceptance of the DROS information by the DOJ and the assignment of the unique DROS number.

(PC sections 12071, 12072)

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21. Who is exempt from the waiting period?

The most common exemptions to the 10-day wait include:

- a. California law enforcement officers are exempt from the waiting period if they have a letter signed by the head of the agency or commanding officer, stating they are full time paid peace officers authorized to carry a firearm in the performance of their duties and authorizing the purchase. The dealer must retain the original letter and attach it to the DROS record.
- b. Persons who have special weapons permits issued by DOJ are exempt. The dealer must retain a copy of the permit and attach it to the DROS record. Qualifying special weapons permits include:
 1. Possession of Short-barreled Rifle/Shotgun, (PC Section 12095);
 2. Possession or Sales of Machine Guns (PC Section 12230, 12250); and
 3. Possession of Destructive Device (PC Section 12305).
- c. Persons who have a curio and relic collector's license issued by the BATF and who have a valid COE issued by the DOJ are exempt from the waiting period only when purchasing curio and relic firearms. The

dealer must retain a copy of the FFL collector's license and the COE.

- d. Dealers transferring a handgun from inventory to their personal collection are exempt from the waiting period but are still required to submit DROS records for each handgun transferred. There are no DROS submission or waiting period requirement for dealers transferring long guns to themselves for personal use. The BATF's acquisition/disposition log requirements still apply.

(PC section 12078)

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22. How are dealers notified regarding DROS denials and delays?

If the DOJ determines that a purchaser is ineligible to possess a firearm, the DOJ will deny the sale. The dealer will be notified via telephone not to deliver the firearm. A confirming letter will be sent via the U.S. Mail, and a message via the PSD (for dealers who have a PSD).

When the DOJ is not able to immediately determine a purchaser's eligibility to possess firearms, the dealer is notified as above to delay delivery of the firearm. Once a determination is made, the dealer will be notified as above to cancel the sale or to deliver the firearm.

(PC section 12076(d))

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23. Is there a maximum time frame after submission of the DROS information during which a firearms dealer may release a firearm?

Yes. If a firearm purchaser does not take physical possession of the firearm within 30 days of submission of the DROS information, the dealer must cancel the sale and, if the firearm was a handgun, send the DOJ a cancellation form for that transaction. If the purchaser still wants to take possession of the firearm, the entire DROS process must be completed including payment of DROS fees.

(PC section 12071(b))

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24. If a handgun purchase transaction is delayed by the DOJ, how does it affect the delivery within 30-days restriction?

The 30-day delivery restriction begins upon notification from the DOJ that the delay has been lifted and that the dealer is authorized to deliver the handgun. The firearms dealer must retain all notifications and correspondence.

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25. How do I handle the paperwork when a purchaser returns a defective firearm?

If a firearm is brought to you for service or repair, you may return it to the person who submitted it for repair without undergoing the DROS process. If the firearm must be replaced, a new DROS is required. There is an exemption from the one-handgun-per-month restriction for exchanged handguns.

(PC section 12072 (a)(9)(xi))

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26. How can I correct or cancel a DROS submission?

If you need to report a handgun DROS correction or cancellation within the 10-day waiting period, you may do so with the computer with which you submitted the DROS.

If you need to report a handgun DROS correction or cancellation after the 10-day waiting period, you must fill out the DROS cancellation or correction form and mail it to the DOJ.

In the event of a correction, only one handgun data field may be modified. If additional fields require modification, the DROS must be canceled and a new DROS submitted. A handgun DROS must also be canceled if the transaction is not completed within 30 days. All correspondence and documentation must be retained for three years for inspection purposes.

(PC section 12076(d)(5))

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27. What is required if a dealer closes a firearms business?

The dealer must write a letter indicating the CFD and the effective date of the closure to: DOJ Firearms Licensing and Permits Unit (FLPU), P.O. Box 920200, Sacramento, CA 94203-0200. The dealer is required to retain completed DROS forms for three years from the date of sale, after which they may be destroyed. The dealer should contact the BATF for federal requirements for closing a firearms business.

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28. What are the handgun safety testing requirements?

The DOJ certifies laboratories to test handguns. No handgun may be sold, manufactured, etc., in California unless it has been safety tested by a DOJ-certified laboratory, found to have passed safety/reliability standards, and approved for sale by the DOJ. Firearm manufacturers and importers, who wish to certify a handgun model for sale or manufacture within California must submit three copies of the handgun model directly to a DOJ-certified laboratory for testing.

Upon approval of the test report and payment of listing fees, the handgun is listed on the DOJ Roster of Certified Handguns (RCH). The roster lists qualifying handguns according to: make / model / caliber / barrel length. A change in any one of the RCH categories is considered a new model and requires a new certification.

Effective January 1, 2001, only handgun models listed on the RCH may be manufactured, imported for sale, or sold in California. Exemptions exist for private party and law enforcement transactions.

A listing of certified handgun models is currently available [on this website](#). Listings are also available upon request by fax, and will periodically be sent as administrative messages to operators of Point of Sale Devices.

(PC section 12125, et seq.)

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29. What are the firearm warning label and safety device requirements?

Each firearm sold by firearms dealers must be accompanied by a child safety warning label.

DOJ standards for firearms safety devices have been in effect since January 1, 2001. The DOJ has certified independent laboratories to test safety devices for compliance with the adopted standards. Any manufacturer of safety devices who wishes to have a particular device certified for sale in California must submit the device to a DOJ-certified testing laboratory. The DOJ-certified laboratory will test the device and forward the test results to the DOJ. Subject to DOJ application and fee requirements, qualifying devices may be approved by the DOJ for inclusion on the [Roster of Approved Safety Devices \(RSD\)](#), [pdf](#).

Effective January 1, 2002, no firearm may be sold in California unless:

- a. It is sold with a DOJ-approved safety device listed on the RSD; or
- b. The purchaser can prove purchase of an approved device within 30 days prior to taking delivery of the firearm, or
- c. The purchaser can prove that he/she owns a gun safe.

(PC section 12087, et seq.)

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30. Are firearms dealers required to provide customers with anything upon DOJ's denial of a firearm transaction?

Yes. If the DOJ instructs a firearms dealer to cancel a firearms transaction, the firearms dealer is required to provide the prohibited individual with a [Prohibited Persons Notice Form and Power of Attorney for Firearms Transfer and Disposal](#), [pdf](#).

(PC section 12071)

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31. Are firearms dealers required to provide the purchaser of a firearm with the California

Firearms Laws pamphlet?

Not any more. However, the California Firearms Law pamphlet may be [downloaded for free, pdf](#) from this website.

(PC section 12071)

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32. Are firearms dealers required to capture the thumbprint on the DROS form for each firearm recipient?

Yes. The firearms dealer must require the firearm recipient to place his or her right thumbprint, in black ink, on the back of the DROS form. If the recipient is unable to comply, then the dealer should contact the DOJ at **(916) 263-4887** for instructions.

(PC section 12077)

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33. What documentation is acceptable to demonstrate proof of residency for handgun purchasers?

Utility bill from within the past three months that bears on its face the individual's name and either of the following:

1. The individual's current residential address as declared on the Dealer's Record of Sale (DROS) form
or
2. The individual's residential address as it appears on his or her California Driver License or California Identification Card, or change of address attachment thereto.

"Utility bill" means a statement of charges for providing service to the individual's residence by either a physical connection (i.e., hard wired telephone connection or cable connection, or a water or gas pipeline connection) or a telemetric connection (i.e., satellite television or radio broadcast service) to a non-mobile, fixed antenna reception device.

Residential lease that bears the individual's name and either of the following:

1. The individual's current residential address as declared on the Dealer's Record of Sale (DROS) form
or
2. The individual's address as it appears on his or her California Driver License or California Identification card, or change of address attachment thereto.

"Residential lease" means either of the following:

- A. A signed and dated contract by which the individual (tenant) agrees to pay a specified monetary sum or provide other consideration for the right to occupy an abode for a specified period of time
or
- B. A signed and dated rental agreement by which the individual (tenant) agrees to pay a specified monetary sum or provide other consideration at fixed intervals for the right to occupy an abode.

Property deed the bears the individual's name and either of the following:

1. The individual's current residential address as declared on the Dealer's Record of Sale (DROS) form
or
2. The individual's address as it appears on his or her California Driver License or California Identification Card, or change of address attachment thereto.

"Property deed" means either or the following:

- A. A valid deed of trust for the individual's property of current residence that identifies the individual as a grantee of the trust

or

- B. A valid Certificate of title issued by a licensed title insurance company that identifies the individual as a title holder to his or her property of current residence.

Current, government-issued license, permit, or registration, other than a CA Driver License or CA Identification Card, that has a specified expiration date or period of validity. The license, permit, or registration must bear the individual's name and either of the following:

1. The individual's current residential address as declared on the Dealer's Record of Sale (DROS) form
- or
2. The individual's address as it appears on his or her California Driver License or California Identification Card, or change of address attachment thereto.

Examples of acceptable proof of residency:

1. Current DMV registrations.
2. Electricity, gas, cable bill with purchaser's name on it from within the last 3 months.
3. Signed, dated and notarized rental agreement/contract.

Examples of documents that are NOT acceptable proof of residency:

1. Hunting or fishing license (these documents are not issued by the government).
2. Cellular phone bill.

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34. What proof of residency are peace officers required to provide to the firearms dealer?
- Peace officers, including reserve and retired peace officers, may present valid credentials issued by a California law enforcement agency in lieu of the other required residency documentation. This consideration is given to peace officers who do not want to provide documentation of their residence address for security reasons and who otherwise do not object to having their credentials copied by the firearms dealer for inclusion with the DROS record.

(PC section 12071)

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35. Can I require a prospective employee to obtain a PFEC as a condition of employment?
- Penal Code section 12077.5(g) prohibits persons or agencies from requesting or requiring another person to obtain a PFEC. However, effective January 1, 2004, California Licensed Firearms dealers are authorized to require their employees to possess a Certificate of Eligibility as evidence that the employee is not prohibited from possessing firearms.

(PC section 12077.5)

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36. What is an Employee COE?
- The Employee COE is issued to persons who apply for a COE as employees of a licensed California firearms dealer, and are found to be lawfully eligible to possess firearms. A person who has an existing or non-employee COE may be associated with a licensed firearms dealer by the submission of a [COE Report of Employment form, pdf](#). This form may also be used to notify the DOJ if an employee COE holder goes to work for a different firearms dealer.

(PC section 12071)

37. Is the Employee COE required of each employee?

No. The firearms dealer may choose whether or not to require each of his employees who has access to firearms to obtain a DOJ Employee COE. If the firearms dealer chooses not to require an Employee COE, then the employee does not need to obtain one unless he or she is required to under local licensing requirements.

(PC section 12071)

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38. What is required to obtain an Employee COE?

Download a [COE Application Package, pdf](#). New applicants must take the two completed Request for Live Scan Service forms to a Live Scan station. Please refer to www.ag.ca.gov/fingerprints for Live Scan station locations. Have the Live Scan station submit your fingerprint impressions to both DOJ and FBI. You must pay the Live Scan operator a \$32 DOJ fingerprint processing fee, a \$24 FBI fingerprint processing fee, as well as the Live Scan operator's fee (Note: the Live Scan operator fee varies by Live Scan site, and the Bureau of Firearms does not regulate or set this price). The Live Scan operator will enter an Applicant Tracking Identifier (ATI) number on your copy of the Request for Live Scan service form. That ATI number documents your fingerprint submissions. After submitting your fingerprints, complete the COE Application form being sure to include your Live Scan ATI number. Because you are applying for a COE as an employee or agent of a licensed firearms dealer you must check the "employee" box and record the licensee's California Firearms Dealer (CFD) number and dealership name on the application. Submit your completed COE application with the \$22 COE application processing fee to Department of Justice to the address shown on the application. Renewal applicants do not have to submit fingerprint images.

(PC section 12071)

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39. If I require my employee to obtain a COE, who is responsible for paying the \$78 fee?

California law does not address the issue of who is responsible for COE fees. However, the DOJ will not process the COE application unless the fee is included with the application.

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40. May I charge sales tax on the DROS fees?

No. On January 1, 1999, the state Board of Equalization ruled that the DROS fees are not subject to retail sales tax. Firearms dealers licensed pursuant to Penal Code section 12071 shall not charge sales tax on the DROS fees. Questions regarding firearms transfer fees can be directed to the DOJ through this [website](#) or by calling **(916) 263-4887**. Questions regarding sales tax can be made to the California Board of Equalization at its website www.boe.ca.gov.

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DROS Internet Process

1. [Can I initiate a DROS at a gun show without swiping the purchaser's DMV issued driver's license or identification card if I am unable to use my DOJ-issued or privately owned PC at the show/event?](#)
2. [How can I comply with the requirement to capture the purchaser's DMV information using a magnetic card swipe reader if the reader malfunctions or the stripe on the back of the card is defective?](#)
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6. [Will DOJ DROS denial and/or rejection notices continue to automatically print out when I turn on my PC in the same manner they do with the current Monorail PC systems?](#)
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9. Is the DROS Internet software that came loaded on my new HP Vectra PC compatible with anti-virus and/or firewall software?

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1. Can I initiate a DROS at a gun show without swiping the purchaser's DMV issued driver's license or identification card if I am unable to use my DOJ-issued or privately owned PC at the show/event?

Yes. You may initiate a DROS at a gun show using a paper DROS worksheet. Upon return to your business location, you may manually input the information into your DOJ-issued or privately owned PC using the keyboard. Please remember, the 10-day waiting period does not begin until you submit the DROS to DOJ using your DOJ-issued or privately owned PC and receive a DROS number. Additionally, prior to the delivery of the firearm, you must swipe the purchaser's DMV issued driver's license/identification card through your DOJ-issued magnetic card swipe reader. Then, print out and attach the information to the copy of the DROS that is retained in your dealership records. Following this process complies with the requirement as long as the information on the purchaser's DMV printout matches the same information recorded on the DROS. Detailed instructions for this process are as follows:

Click on the Windows "Start" menu located in the bottom left-hand corner of the screen. From the "start" menu choose "Programs" then select "Accessories" then select "WordPad". Next, swipe the purchaser's DMV card through the reader and the information will automatically transfer to the WordPad screen on your PC. Finally, to print the information, choose "File" from within the WordPad program application and select "Print" and then click "ok".

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2. How can I comply with the requirement to capture the purchaser's DMV information using a magnetic card swipe reader if the reader malfunctions or the stripe on the back of the card is defective?

If your DOJ-issued magnetic card swipe reader malfunctions or if the purchaser's DMV card's magnetic stripe is defective, you may manually enter the information using your keyboard. Additionally, you must retain a photocopy of the purchaser's DMV card along with the original DROS.

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3. Why do I have to swipe the card prior to delivery of a firearm sold at a gun show instead of making a photocopy of the purchaser's DMV card as discussed in the answer to question number two?

Penal Code section 12077(f)(2) specifically authorizes dealer's to obtain a photocopy of the purchaser's DMV card in the event the card cannot be swiped through the reader due to technical limitations. However, there exist no statutory/legal exemption from this requirement for transactions that occur at gun shows.

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4. How do I get a user ID and password so I can begin using my PC to submit DROS applications to the DOJ?

To request a user ID and password, you must contact the DROS Service Center at **1-800-974-DROS** (3767) and select option number three for technical support. You will receive a user ID and password immediately, however, it will not be activated and ready to use for at least twenty-four hours.

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5. How can I get magnetic card swipe readers to use with PC(s) I have in my dealership/home?

You may obtain additional MagTek brand Magnetic Card Swipe readers [part number 21080201 (wedge) or 20140107 (USB)] by calling the manufacturer directly at **310-667-6410** or toll free at **800-421-5208** ext. 6609 and ask to speak with Mark Baker. You must inform the manufacturer that you intend to use the device with the California DOJ DROS Entry System. MagTek Magnetic Card Swipe readers are also available from retail outlets. To contact a retail dealer call Gemini Computers at **888-943-6464** and ask to speak with Uri Rozic. You must inform the dealer that you intend to use the device with the California DOJ DROS Entry System and need to purchase one of the MagTek Magnetic Card Swipe readers as noted above. Please note that Verizon Business is not liable for any issues related to the purchase of and/or operation of Magnetic Card Swipe readers.

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6. Will DOJ DROS denial and/or rejection notices continue to automatically print out when I turn on my PC in the same manner they do with the current Monorail PC systems?
- No. To review and print DOJ DROS denial/rejection notices, you must follow the instructions listed on page sixty-five or the section titled "*Reviewing DOJ Notices*" of the [DROS System User Manual, pdf](#).

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7. Where can I obtain a copy of the DROS System User Manual?
- You can download a copy of the DROS System User Manual from the following website address:
<https://dros.appsolgrp.com/wpsd/manual.pdf>

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8. Can I load my own personal software on my DOJ-issued PC?
- Yes; however loading hardware or software to your DOJ-issued PC may invalidate/void the warranty.

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9. Is the DROS Internet software that came loaded on my new HP Vectra PC compatible with anti-virus and/or firewall software?
- Most off-the-shelf Anti-Virus and/or Firewall software is compatible for use on your DOJ-issued HP Vectra PC.

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